

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	EUR-00	VC-00
	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OMB-00	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00
	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	DRL-00	G-00
	SAS-00	/000W					

-----E4F261 261630Z /03

FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8374  
INFO ECOWAS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE  
DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 000787

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/26/2014

TAGS: [GH](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TO](#)

SUBJECT: GILCHRIST OLYMPIO'S VIEWS OF ABUJA MEETING AND  
TOGO ELECTIONS

Classified By: PolChief Scott Ticknor for reasons 1.5 d and e.

11. (C) Summary: PolChief met on April 26 with Togolese opposition leader Gilchrist Olympio in Accra. Olympio said that in Abuja he had agreed to Obasanjo's request that he and Faure Gnassingbe cooperate in a government of national unity. However, the agreement was "in theory", while in practice this would be very difficult. If asked to join Faure in a government of national unity, the opposition would consult, but would be unlikely to accept. Olympio was convinced the election result -- which came to us during the meeting -- was rigged and that the opposition won 65 percent of the vote. He had no specific plan for preventing violence but hoped the international community would bring pressure and offers of assistance to bear on a solution which would reject the election result and support a repeat, fairer election in six months. End summary.

-----  
Meeting in Abuja  
-----

12. (C) In an April 26 meeting with PolChief, Togo opposition leader Gilchrist Olympio said he had a four hour session with President Obasanjo in Abuja, including a one-on-one and a lengthy meeting which included Faure Gnassingbe. Obasanjo, who did most of the talking, told both parties that whichever party wins the election, it should be seen as a transitional government to pave the way for democracy in Togo. He noted that the military is an important institution and the winner needs to learn to manage. He hoped that, with training and assistance, the military could evolve from a "tribal" to a "republican" institution. Obasanjo also acknowledged that the constitution needs to be reformed. He asked Faure and Olympio to agree to cooperate in a government of national unity, whoever wins. Olympio said he agreed "in theory". Obasanjo followed the meeting with a press conference. According to Olympio, there was then a somewhat contrived congeniality. Obasanjo asked the two men to shake hands and then asked Olympio to embrace Faure (which Olympio said he would not do because he had never met Gnassingbe before this event.)

13. (C) Olympio then clarified that, while agreeing "in theory", in practice this idea was "very difficult". When asked what he would do if Faure offered participation in a government of national unity, he said he would have to consult colleagues in the opposition but he thought the opposition would be unlikely to accept. Olympio added that he had already faced criticism within his coalition for what he did in Abuja. When asked what he would do if were in a position to govern Togo, he mentioned he could think about being inclusive in ministerial portfolios, "but we didn't win."

-----  
The Election Results  
-----

14. (C) Half way through our meeting, someone came to us with the election results showing Gnassingbe had won. Olympio took note but had no visible reaction. He said the result was as he expected. The opposition had faced "a Hobbson's Choice" - participate in an election they knew would lose through manipulation or not participate and face international criticism. Togo could now be entering a difficult period, he said.

15. (C) PolChief asked if there was a way to prevent an outbreak of violence and what the opposition would do to intervene. "We will not encourage it", he responded, noting that opposition activists would go through the country with megaphones urging calm. However, it is not clear that the youth will listen, he said. When asked what he would do to calm events, he said he would consult with other party leaders from within Ghana (many of them visit him in Accra).

16. (C) He was confident the U.K. and Canada would reject the election results. He believes the election was rigged. Because indelible ink was easily removed, and there was significant ballot stuffing, the ballots in the boxes do not reflect the will of the voters, he said. Nonetheless, he opined that the opposition won 65 percent of the vote. When PolChief showed him a transcript of the Department Spokesperson's response to questions in the April 25 daily briefing, Olympio was pleased. He hoped the U.S., Germany, Canada and Nigeria would reject the election results and press for a new election in six months. His ideal would then be for these governments to support a package of technical and financial assistance that would help Togo make electoral

reforms and prepare for a truly free and fair election. This would require international pressure on Gnassingbe. Obasanjo offered to put a permanent African Union representative in Togo and there is also an offer of a permanent ECOWAS rep, "to monitor decisions" in Togo. Olympio welcomed these offers.

-----  
Comment  
-----

17. (C) Olympio has known Obasanjo for fifteen years and clearly sees Nigeria as a key position to find a way out of the current situation. Olympio offered no plan for preventing violence except hopes that the international community would step in (although he reiterated his dismissal of the effectiveness of ECOWAS.) In previous recent meetings, Olympio had expressed optimism that the opposition could win the election. His lack of emotion when the results came in probably reflects a resignation in the face of election-day violence and irregularities. On election night, Olympio had called PolChief in a panic mode, saying it was "the worst case scenario". He was not panicking today (he was trying to relax in his gardening shorts) but appeared undecided about what happens next. His comments about the need for international pressure and support for a new election were in response to PolChief's questions as we were walking out of the meeting and appeared more off-the-cuff than well thought through.

YATES

NNNN